



State of Vermont

December 2009

Dear School Principal:

In June, 2006 the Vermont Legislature asked the Anti-Violence Partnership: A Community Collaboration at the University of Vermont (AVP) to set up a Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force (SVPTF) in order to do an inventory of the sexual violence prevention programs in the state, particularly those that are delivered in schools. This initiative is connected to the work of [*The Vermont Approach: A Strategic Plan for Comprehensive, Collaborative Sexual Violence Prevention in Vermont*](#), a parallel statewide project of the AVP also launched in 2006.

The SVPTF, composed of representatives from state and local agencies designated in the legislative mandate, (including the Department of Education), has met monthly since 2006, first conducting a survey of schools' and community agencies' prevention programs in 2007, and, since then, developing several prevention recommendations and resources. One of those resources, a sexual violence prevention "toolkit" for schools and community partners will be particularly useful for school districts and supervisory unions to achieve compliance with recent legislation amending health education content describe below.

In recognition of the importance of sexual violence prevention, with youth and adults, Act 1 of 2009, established a timeframe for the SVPTF to complete "technical assistance materials" that "support the instruction required by 16 V.S.A. § 131(11), ...to help school districts and supervisory unions in the creation and implementation of developmentally appropriate [sexual violence prevention] instructional programs." The 16 VSA section referenced, defines briefly sexual violence prevention content for schools' K-12 health education instruction, however, it does not mandate or require a particular curriculum.

The Vermont *Sexual Violence Prevention Technical Assistance Resource Guide (TARG)*, will provide guidelines for schools' capacity-building around sexual violence prevention programs and nationally recognized, "best practice" criteria for schools to identify what sexual violence prevention curricula and activities work in their local community. Neither the Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force as a body, nor the TARG as the mandated product of the SVPTF's work, represent endorsement of specific sexual violence prevention curricula, models or programs. After review by the Department of Education and the Department for Children and Family Services, the TARG will be available to schools in July 2010, as required by Act 1.

In the meantime, please contact Donna McAllister at donna.mcallister@state.vt.us or (802) 828-1636 if you need assistance.

Sincerely,

Stephen R. Dale
Commissioner
Department for Children and Families

Armando Vilaseca
Commissioner
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